

CHAPTER 23

AN ACT concerning student attendance records, amending P.L.1995, c.235, and supplementing chapter 38 of the Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 3 of P.L.1995, c.235 (C.18A:7E-3) is amended to read as follows:

C.18A:7E-3 Report card information.

3. Report cards issued pursuant to section 2 of this act shall include, but not be limited to, the following information for:

- a. the school district and for each school within the district, as appropriate:

- (1) results of the elementary assessment programs;

- (2) results of the Early Warning Test;

- (3) results of the High School Proficiency Test;

- (4) daily attendance records for students and professional staff;

- (5) student graduation and dropout rates;

- (6) annual student scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test;

- (7) total student enrollment, percentage of limited English proficient students, percentage of students in advanced placement courses, and any other school characteristics which the commissioner deems appropriate;

- (8) instructional resources including teacher/student ratio, average class size and amount of instructional time per day, as calculated by formulas specified by the commissioner;

- (9) a written narrative by the school principal or a designee which describes any special achievements, events, problems or initiatives of the school or district;

- (10) data identifying the number and nature of all reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying;

- (11) indicators of student career readiness;

- (12) the number and percentage of students who were chronically absent, as defined in rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner of Education within 90 days of the effective date of P.L.2018, c.23 (C.18A:38-25.1 et al.), including the number and percentage of students who were chronically absent disaggregated by multiple student subgroups to be determined by the commissioner ; and

- (13) the number and percentage of students who received a disciplinary suspension; and

- b. the school district, as appropriate:

- (1) per pupil expenditures and State aid ratio;

- (2) percent of budget allocated for salaries and benefits of administrative personnel;

- (3) percent of budget allocated for salaries and benefits of teachers;

- (4) percentage increase over the previous year for salaries and benefits of administrative and instructional personnel;

- (5) the number of administrative personnel and the ratio of administrative personnel to instructional personnel;

- (6) a profile of the most recent graduating class concerning their educational or employment plans following graduation; and

- (7) any other information which the commissioner deems appropriate.

For the purposes of this section, the Commissioner of Education shall establish a uniform methodology for the reporting of the data concerning administrative personnel on a full-time equivalent basis.

C.18A:38-25.1 “Chronically absent” students, corrective action plan.

2. a. As used in this section, “chronically absent” shall be defined in rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner of Education within 90 days of the effective date of P.L.2018, c.23 (C.18A:38-25.1 et al.).

b. In the event that 10 percent or more of the students enrolled in a public school are chronically absent, the school shall develop a corrective action plan to improve absenteeism rates. The corrective action plan shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

- (1) identifying problems and barriers to school attendance;
- (2) developing recommendations to address the problems and barriers to school attendance that have been identified;
- (3) outlining communication strategies to educate and inform parents on the importance of school attendance;
- (4) establishing protocols on informing and engaging parents when a child begins to show a pattern of absences; and
- (5) reviewing school policies to ensure that they support improved school attendance.

In developing the corrective action plan, the school shall solicit input from parents of students currently attending the school. The solicitation shall include, at a minimum, a parental survey that includes questions related to parents’ beliefs regarding the reasons why students are chronically absent and recommendations on the best ways to improve attendance. In developing the corrective action plan, the school shall engage the school’s parent organization, if one exists, in identifying the causes of the school’s high absenteeism rate and possible solutions. If there is no parent organization at the school, the school shall hold a public meeting to provide parents with an opportunity to provide input during the development of the corrective action plan.

c. The school shall present the corrective action plan to the board of education. The school shall annually review and revise the corrective action plan, and present the revisions to the board, until the percentage of students who are chronically absent is less than 10 percent.

C.18A:38-25.2 Annual review.

3. The Commissioner of Education shall annually review the chronic absenteeism rates of each school and school district, as included on the School Report Cards issued pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1995, c.235 (C.18A:7E-2), and report on the rates to the State Board of Education.

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved May 30, 2018.